



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 261

February Session, 2004

Substitute Senate Bill No. 322

Senate, March 25, 2004

The Committee on Human Services reported through SEN. HANDLEY of the 4th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SERVICES FOR THE BLIND.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-293 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2004*):

3 (a) The Board of Education and Services for the Blind shall consist of
4 seven members, six of whom shall be appointed by the Governor and
5 shall be residents of this state. The Commissioner of Social Services
6 shall be a member, ex officio. [The other six members , two of whom
7 shall be blind persons, shall be appointed by the Governor, and each
8 shall be a resident of this state.] One of the members appointed by the
9 Governor shall be the parent of a child who receives services provided
10 by the board, and not less than two of the members appointed by the
11 Governor shall be blind persons. The Governor may, for reasonable
12 cause, remove any [appointive] appointed member and appoint
13 another person to fill the vacancy for the unexpired portion of the

14 term. [Said] The board shall meet annually in the month of September
15 and may meet at any other time upon the call of its director; and the
16 director shall call a meeting at the request of two members. Any
17 appointed member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings or
18 fifty per cent of all meetings held during any calendar year shall be
19 deemed to have resigned. A majority of the members in office shall
20 constitute a quorum. The board shall adopt rules for its own action and
21 regulations for determining what persons shall receive benefits under
22 the provisions of this chapter.

23 (b) The Board of Education and Services for the Blind shall be
24 within the Department of Social Services for administrative purposes
25 only.

26 Sec. 2. Section 3 of public act 03-217 is repealed and the following is
27 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

28 (a) There is established a council to monitor the activities of the
29 Board of Education and Services for the Blind in carrying out its
30 mission and statutorily prescribed duties.

31 (b) The council shall consist of the following members:

32 (1) One appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
33 one who shall be a person with expertise in business administration
34 and financial management;

35 (2) One appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, who
36 is a representative of a state-wide organization that represents the
37 interests of the blind;

38 (3) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of
39 Representatives who is an adult with blindness, receiving services
40 from the Board of Education and Services for the Blind;

41 (4) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate who is an
42 adult with blindness, receiving services from the Board of Education
43 and Services for the Blind;

44 (5) The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing
45 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
46 relating to human services, or their designees;

47 (6) The chairpersons of the legislative program and review
48 committee, or their designees;

49 (7) The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, or the
50 secretary's designee;

51 (8) The Commissioner of [the Department of] Social Services, or the
52 commissioner's designee;

53 (9) The Commissioner of [the Department of] Education, or the
54 commissioner's designee;

55 (10) The executive director of the Board of Education and Services
56 for the Blind, or the director's designee.

57 (c) Any member of the council appointed under subdivision (5) or
58 (6) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member of the General
59 Assembly.

60 (d) All appointments to the council shall be made no later than
61 thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be
62 filled by the appointing authority.

63 (e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president
64 pro tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the council,
65 from among the members of the council. Such chairpersons shall
66 schedule the first meeting of the council, which shall be held not later
67 than July 1, 2003. The council shall meet at least monthly thereafter
68 until February 1, [2004] 2005, and shall terminate not later than July 1,
69 [2004] 2005.

70 (f) The council, in consultation with the Board of Education and
71 Services for the Blind shall establish benchmarks concerning agency
72 management, operations and services. The council shall: (1) Monitor

73 the activities of the Board of Education and Services for the Blind
74 regarding: (A) The quality, efficiency and equity of (i) educational
75 services for children who are blind or visually impaired, (ii) home and
76 daily living skills services for persons who are blind, (iii) vocational
77 rehabilitation services and programs for persons who are blind, (iv)
78 outreach efforts to identify and provide information and services to
79 elderly persons who are blind, (B) the provision of employment
80 training and experience in a competitive work environment and
81 availability of the broadest employment and entrepreneurial
82 opportunities for individuals who are blind, (C) the development and
83 implementation of strategic planning efforts, (D) the accountability of
84 fiscal operations, including, but not limited to, the preparation of a
85 detailed program budget and expenditure reports, (E) agency
86 implementation of the administrative recommendations contained in
87 the December, 2002 Legislative Program Review and Investigations
88 Committee on the Board of Education and Services vending
89 operations; and (2) develop recommendations for proposed changes in
90 the organizational structure of the Board of Education and Services for
91 the Blind.

92 (g) Not later than February 1, [2004] 2005, the council shall submit a
93 report on the progress made by the Board of Education and Services
94 for the Blind in meeting benchmarks established by the council to the
95 joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance
96 of matters relating to human services, appropriations and the budgets
97 of state agencies and education, in accordance with the provisions of
98 section 11-4a of the general statutes. Such report shall also include
99 legislative proposals and recommendations for proposed changes in
100 the organizational structure of the Board of Education and Services for
101 the Blind.

102 (h) Failure by the Board of Education and Services for the Blind to
103 meet specific benchmarks established by the council may result in the
104 transfer of authority and related funding for deficient programs and
105 services to another state agency.

This act shall take effect as follows:	
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2004</i>
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

The effective date in section 2 was changed from "Effective October 1, 2004" to "Effective from passage". Such change is required to ensure that the monitoring council not go out of existence on July 1, 2004.

HS *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill makes changes to the Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB) and the BESB monitoring council (established in PA 03-217) that will result in no cost.

OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 322

AN ACT CONCERNING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SERVICES FOR THE BLIND**SUMMARY:**

By law, the Board of Education and Services to the Blind (BESB) consists of the commissioner of social services and six state residents the governor appoints. The bill requires at least two of the appointees to be blind and one the parent of a blind child. Under current law, two of the appointees must be blind.

The bill also extends (1) the deadline for the BESB monitoring council to meet and report to the legislature on BESB's progress from February 1, 2004 to February 1, 2005 and (2) the council's sunset date from July 1, 2004 to July 1, 2005.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage for the monitoring council's provisions and October 1, 2004 for the changes in the board's composition.

BACKGROUND***BESB Monitoring Council***

PA 03-217 established a 14-member BESB monitoring council. Among other things, the council, which meets monthly, must monitor BESB's fiscal accountability and the quality, efficiency, and equity of BESB's provision of (1) educational services for children, (2) home and daily living skills services, (3) vocational rehabilitation, and (4) outreach to potential elderly clients. It must also develop recommendations for proposed changes in BESB's organizational structure.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 17 Nay 0

